William Golding is undoubtedly one of the most significant and highly regarded novelists of our time. The term 'significant' could sound discouraging since philosophical explorations with or without provisional gains have begun to dominate modern literature. One supposes that the tendency is inevitable since it is a philosophical — and psychological — situation which has given modern literature its impulse and its direction. A concern with fundamental questions and attempts to discover basics are bound to characterize thinking and feeling and writing in a situation which existing philosophies have been discarded. But significance need not always mean writing which is so heavily symbolic or allegorical that persons and events become insignificant in themselves and are important only for what they convey. Golding is among those novelists of our time who have been able to combine this "high seriousness" and such "criticism of life" with the ability to create living personages and devise interesting situations. This is not to say that the author's thematic concerns are not obvious or even too obvious at places. But his novels are eminently readable because he has the imagination and the skill to create
interesting plot-situations and characters capable of holding our attention. Golding is, in short, an artist in addition to being a man with ideas to convey or discover.

Chapter Division:

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters. The First describes briefly the social and literary background. The Second Chapter and the Third discuss the themes of Golding's novels. For convenience's sake, the themes of the first three books — Lord of the Flies, The Inheritors and Pincher Martin — are discussed in the Second Chapter and those of the remaining three novels — Free Fall, The Spire and The Pyramid — in the Third. Three chapters are devoted to discussion of his technique. Chapter Four analyses Golding's technique of characterization. His Plots and Plot-Situations are analysed in the Fifth chapter. Aspects of technique such as narrative devices, use of language or symbolic communication are examined in the Sixth chapter. Chapter Seven concludes the study by evaluating Golding's achievement.

The bibliography lists only those books and journals that I have been able to see for myself. Journal material, found in the form of quotations in other books or journals, has been acknowledged in the body of the dissertation along with the source, at the appropriate places with footnote references.